

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-37 are pending.

Claims 1-10 and 30-34 are rejected.

Claims 11-24 and 35-37 are objected to.

Claims 25-29 have been allowed.

Claims 1-10 and 30-34 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 11, 12, 16, 35 and 36 have been amended.

Rejection of Claims 1-10 and 30-33 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-10 and 30-33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by WO 99/31372 to Heritier-Best. Without admitting or denying the patentability of claims 1-10 and 30-33, Applicant has cancelled these claims in order to move this case forward to issue. Therefore, at this time Applicant respectfully requests removal of the rejection and allowance of the remaining claims.

Rejection of Claims 4-5 and 9-10 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 4-5 and 9-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over PCT Application WO 99/31372 to Heritier-Best. The Applicant respectfully traverses the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 4-5 and 9-10. Without admitting or denying the patentability of claims 4-5 and 9-10, Applicant has cancelled these claims in order to move this case forward to issue. Therefore, at this time Applicant respectfully requests removal of the rejection and allowance of the remaining claims.

Rejection of Claims 34 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 34 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over PCT Application WO 99/31372 to Heritier-Best in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,330,880 to Okada et al. The Applicant respectfully traverses the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 34. Without admitting or denying the patentability of claim 34, Applicant has cancelled this claim in order to move this case forward to issue. Therefore, at this time Applicant respectfully requests removal of the rejection and allowance of the remaining claims.

Allowable Matter

The Office Action states that, claims 25-29 are allowable over the prior art. The Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowing these claims over the prior art. In addition the Office Action indicated that claims 11-24 and 35-37 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant has made the appropriate amendments to claims 11-24 and 35-37 in order to incorporate all of the limitations of the underlying base claims into these allowed claims. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests removal of the claim objection to these claims and allowance thereof.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that in view of the above amendments and remarks the claims 11-29 and 35-37, as presented, are in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully requested.

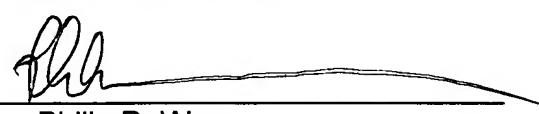
The Examiner is invited to telephone the Applicant's undersigned attorney at (248) 364-4300 if any unresolved matters remain.

Respectfully submitted,

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